

Does It Stack? (Part Three)

By Skip Williams

Now that we've figured out Armor Class, let's take a peek at the attack bonus that our example character has. We'll move on to the Reflex save and jumping after that.

Attack Bonus

Our example character enjoys several attack bonuses for both melee and ranged attacks.

- +5 on melee attacks from Strength 20 (base score of 16 and a +4 enhancement bonus from the *bull's strength* spell [the +2 enhancement bonus from the *gauntlets of ogre power* overlap with the bonus from the spell and doesn't apply]).
- +3 on ranged attacks from Dexterity 17 (base score of 13 and a +4 enhancement bonus from the *cat's grace* spell).
- +1 morale bonus on all attack rolls from the *aid* spell.
- +1 luck bonus on all attack rolls from the *prayer* spell.
- -2 penalty on all attack rolls from the shaken condition (courtesy of the *doom* spell).

That's a lot of bonuses (and one penalty), but all of them stack. Our example character enjoys a +5 bonus on melee attacks and a +3 bonus on ranged attacks.

Please note a couple of things here:

Base Attack Bonus Not Included: Whatever base attack bonus the example character might have isn't figured in here.

Penalties Are Unnamed: In the current version of the **D&D** game, no penalty has a name, so it "stacks" with any bonus and it also stacks with all other penalties (but not with itself).

Full Dexterity Bonus Still Applies: Wearing armor does not reduce your Dexterity score or your Dexterity bonus. It just limits how much of that bonus you can apply to your Armor Class. Our example character gets the full +3 on ranged attacks from Dexterity 17.

Reflex Save

Most of the saving throw bonuses our example character has collected apply to all kinds of saving throws, but let's just look at the Reflex save:

- +3 on Reflex saves from Dexterity 17 (base score of 13 and a +4 enhancement bonus from the *cat's grace* spell).
- +1 morale bonus from the *aid* spell if the attack is a fear effect (not many fear effects have Reflex saves, but anything is possible).
- -2 penalty on all saves from the shaken condition (that nasty *doom* spell again).

- +1 luck bonus on all saves from the *prayer*.

Everything here stacks, so the example character has +2 bonus on Reflex saves (or +3 if the save happens to be against a fear effect).

Some more notes:

Base Save Bonuses Not Included: Whatever base save bonus the example character might have isn't figured in here.

Full Dexterity Bonus Still Applies: As note previously, the Dexterity cap for armor applies only to Armor Class.

Jumping

Our example character actually is quite a jumper, even without the *jump* spell, thanks to a great Strength score and all that speed, but let's work through all the modifiers:

- +5 from Strength 20 (see the section on attack bonus).
- -4 armor check penalty for the +2 *chainmail* (chainmail normally has a -5 penalty, but our example character has magic chainmail, which has to be masterwork to receive any magical enhancement, so the penalty drops by a point).
- -2 armor check penalty for the heavy shield.
- +5 competence bonus from the *boots of striding and springing*.
- -2 penalty from the shaken condition (the *doom* spell once again).
- +4 bonus for speed 40 (see the section on speed).
- +1 luck bonus from the *prayer* spell.

Once again, all these stack, so our example character has a +7 bonus on Jump checks. Given a running start, the example character can make a long jump of 27 feet given a really good roll; the character can count on making at least a 17-foot jump in most cases.

Notable things here include the following:

Bonuses to Skills Count for Untrained Checks: When a skill can be used untrained, any bonuses to the check that a character may acquire apply to the check.

The *Jump* Spell

A *jump* spell would give our example character at least a +10 enhancement bonus on Jump checks. This stacks with all the example character's other Jump bonuses, for a total Jump bonus of +17, allowing running long jumps of up to 37 feet.

Coming in Part Four of Does It Stack?

Skip shows us the exceptions to the rules and other things of note.

About the Author

Skip Williams keeps busy with freelance projects for several different game companies and has been the Sage of ***Dragon** Magazine* since 1986. Skip is a co-designer of the **D&D** 3rd Edition game and the chief architect of the *Monster Manual*. When not devising swift and cruel deaths for player characters, Skip putters in his kitchen or garden (his borscht gets rave reviews).

©1995-2003 Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Wizards is headquartered in Renton, Washington, PO Box 707, Renton, WA 98057.

Based on the original **Dungeons & Dragons®** game by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and on the new edition of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison. **D&D**, **Dungeons & Dragons**, and **Forgotten Realms** are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This material is protected under the laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction of or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. This Wizards of the Coast game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit **www.wizards.com/d20**. ©2001-2004 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved. Made in the U.S.A.

Visit our website at www.wizards.com/dnd